

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A method of providing services from a service provider to a plurality of independent entities, the method comprising:

facilitating, on a first set of one or more servers of said service provider, a first set of
5 services that require said first set of one or more servers to trust said independent entities;

facilitating, on a second set of one or more servers of said service provider, a second
set of services that require said independent entities to trust said second set of one or more
servers; and

providing said first and second set of services to said independent entities.

10 2. The method of claim 1 wherein a trust is established so that said first set of servers' trusts said second set of servers.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein said first set of servers provides data services and wherein said second set of services provides management and configuration services.

15 4. The method of claim 3 wherein each of said independent entities is organized as a single forest.

5. The method of claims 3 or 4 wherein each of said entities is organized as a single domain.

6. The method of claim 3 wherein at least one of said independent entities is embodied as a forest of computers that spans multiple customer sites.

20 7. The method of claim 1 wherein said first set of services comprises at least one of the following: virus protection services, remote access, backup, software sharing, and telephony services, and wherein said second set of services comprises at least one of the following: security,

password management, software update, software distribution, access control.

8. A system for providing computer services a to plurality of remotely located computers, the network comprising:

a service forest for providing data services to said remotely located computers;

5 a management and configuration forest for providing management and configuration services to said remotely located computers;

said management and configuration forest and said service forest being separate from each other.

9. The system of claim 8 wherein said remotely located computers are arranged into plural domains, and wherein each of said plural domains is associated with a separate customer.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said remotely located computers are arranged into forests, and wherein at least one forest spans multiple customers.

11. A network of computers comprising a service forest that trusts and provides services to a plurality of independent remotely located user computers, wherein the user computers trust and are managed and configured by a management forest of computers, and wherein the service forest trusts the management forest.

12. The network of claim 11 wherein computers within said service forest implement telephony functions and email services for plural ones of said remotely located computers.

13. The network of claim 11 wherein computers in said management and configuration forest implement security and password management, software updating and distribution, and configuration and management for plural ones of said remotely located computers.

14. A computer service center comprising plural computers that implement services to

numerous remotely located computers, and wherein services that require said remotely located computers to trust said service center are separate from computers implementing services requiring said service center to trust said remotely located computers, thereby avoiding any two way trusts.

15. The service center of claim 14 wherein said remotely located computers are arranged
5 into groups, each group communicating on a local area network and being associated with an independent entity.

16. The computer service center of claim 11 wherein computers in the service forest communicate with a telephone network.

17. The computer service center of claim 16 wherein computers in the service forest communicate with the data network.

18. The computer service center of claim 16 wherein computers in the service forest provide data backup services for said remotely located user computers.

19. A method of providing computer services to plural remote customers comprising the steps of:

classifying services to be provided to such customers as either services requiring customers to trust a service provider, or services requiring the service provider to trust said customer; and

in response to said step of classifying, determining from what computer or group of computers to provide said services.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein said classifying comprises classifying into either configuration/management functions and data services functions.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein said services are provided from plural computers.

22 A method of providing services to a plurality of serviced entities from a service provider, the method comprising:

defining a one way relationship;

5 separating a first type of services wherein said relationship runs from the service provider to the serviced entity from a second type of services wherein the relationship runs from the serviced entity to the service provider, and separately implementing said first and second types of services.

10 23. The method of claim 22 wherein the first and second types of services are implemented on separate computers.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the relationship is a trust.

15 25. The method of claim 23 wherein said relationship also runs from computers providing said first type of services to computers providing said second type of services.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein at least one computer providing said first type of services or said second type of services is connected to a public data network.

20 27. Apparatus for providing services to plural entities, said apparatus comprising:

plural devices to be serviced;

a first set of servers for providing a first set of services to said devices, said first set of

servers having a one way predetermined relationship with said devices to be serviced;
a second set of servers for providing a second set of services to said devices, said devices having
said one way relationship with said second set of services.

28. Apparatus of claim 27 wherein the one way relationship is a trust.

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29. Apparatus of claim 28 wherein said devices are customer computers, and wherein said
service provider is a remote IT services provider.

30. Apparatus of claim 29 wherein said devices are organized into multiple independent
forests, and wherein said first and second sets of servers are also each organized into a
separate forest.

31. Apparatus of claim 30 wherein said first and second set of servers also have between
them said one way relationship.